

PRAIRIE JUNE

AND

OTHER POEMS

By

JANET MUNRO

(Ida Clarke Thompson)

*To Craven Longfellow Betts
from the author. 1931*

22

With acknowledgements to Canadian Magazine, Bookman
(England), Dalhousie Review, Western Home
Monthly, Toronto Globe and Monitor,
Boston.

Seasons Greetings.

PRAIRIE JUNE

In my dear land the wild duck broods
In June,
And meadow larks
Drop liquid heaven
From golden throats.
The trailing plover
In the summerfallow
Paces aside
From the nestling's hollow.
And the ladies' slipper
Holds a golden dipper
To a dew-drenched moon.

Pluck me a rose
From a million roses,
Red dog roses,
Blown in June,
And warm your hands in the blazing glory
Of tiger lilies
In the breast of noon,
While the sea-green earth
To the sun smiles back
From Prairie Land
In June.

ALIEN

"Go East to the sea, dear love.
Where the spume winds the sea web's loom.
And the ground swell grinds on the grinding shore.
The land breeze lifts the fleeing foam.
There by your seaside home.
And I to the West, beloved.
To the waves of a prairie shore.
Where the night winds blow to the northern glow,
The rocking wheat from a rolling floor,
Blow and glow
Forevermore."

You will think of her when the ship drives in.
The wind at the mast in a mist-racked din
And she muse on thee in a blue-domed field.
In sunlit chaff in a gold stack's lea.
Aye, she will think of thee!

"Go East to the sea, dear love,
And I to my Western home."

THE EXPLORER'S WIFE

She wonders if the sun
Loves to look down where you are dreaming
By the streaming
Athabaska,
Dreaming of her?

For this is Sunday,
And she walks alone
To church, and no one draws her hand
Within his arm and says:
"You are so sweet, I want to touch you.
Marguerite!"

No robin sings for her
But wild and sad,
No veiling trees hide the empty nest
That is not home;
No winds caress, and joy is not for her
When you're away.

Must she still wait through laden summer days
For your return.
When life begins anew?

DEAR ENEMY

Dear enemy!
I pass you every day,
And all of ancient pain
Still comes to me
Along the way.

We pass so close
In lanes and corridors,
Hearts full of old regret,
My high, proud head,
And your that lowers.

Dear enemy!
So loved, what can I say?
Pride rules, but still in dreams
On your safe breast
My head I lay.

THE LITTLE BLACK BRONCHO

They have hitched the little black broncho
In the plow with the four-horse team,
He kicked his mate in the stall,
So they've hitched him next the beam.

The mate fell into the manger
On his back and down at the head,
And the long night wore his life out,
To be found in the morning dead.

The little black broncho loved him—
They were trying to play, the two;
Now they've hitched the little black broncho—
"You'd lose us a horse, would you!"

"Give him the best of the whiffle tree,"
She pleaded, but pleaded in vain;
"He can pull with the Clydes," said the master,
"I'll teach him to do it again."

And he pulled with the Clydes, and at evening,
Sweating, and draggled, and drawn,
He came in like a foal at their sides,
To mourn in his stall until dawn.

By his mate's lone grave in the pasture
On Sunday's he mopes apart;
They can't kill the little black broncho
But he'll die of a broken heart.

CANADA

Joy to the day!
She walks like a bride
To join the matronhood of nations,
Bound on her brows
The flaming maple:
Girdled with gold,
Ermine and beaver enfold
To her shoon of silver:
In either hand she holds
Harvest of plain and sea,
Largesse of mine and tree,
And the Great Sun leaps to meet her.
Canada!

(Prize poem—Confederation Jubilee).

Re-published for private circulation. 200 copies only.
Printed by Reid Pattison Press, Limited.